

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the attention accorded to the instant application, and respectfully requests reconsideration of the application as amended.

Formal Matters

Claims 1-30 were pending and under consideration in the present application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 7, 15, 22, 29 and 30 are amended, claims 5, 6, 8 and 19-21 have been cancelled, and new claims 31 and 32 have been added. Claims 6, 8, 20 and 22 recite allowable subject matter. Features and limitations from claims 5 and 6 have been added to claims 1, 29 and 30, features and limitations from claims 1 and 8 have been added to claim 7, features and limitations from claims 19 and 20 have been added to claim 15, and features and limitations from claims 15 and 21 have been added to claim 22. Accordingly, claims 1-4, 7, 9-18 and 22-32 are pending and under consideration, with claims 1, 7, 15, 22 and 29-32 being in independent form. Care has been taken to ensure no new matter is being entered.

Double Patenting

In the outstanding Final Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-15, 17-19, 21 and 23-30 on the grounds of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-4, 6, 10, and 12-16 of U.S. Patent No. 7,257,408. The Examiner alleges that the conflicting claims are not patentably distinct from the claimed invention.

Independent claims 1, 15, 29 and 30 are amended herein to include the features and limitations of claims 6 and 20, independent claim 7 is amended herein to include the features and limitations of claims 1 and 8, and claim 22 is amended herein to be an independent claim, so that these independent claims, and their dependent claims, are patentably distinct from the conflicting claims cited by the Examiner. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-5, 7, 9-19, 21, and 23-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over applicant's admitted prior art (hereinafter "AAPA") in view of Hanaoka et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0156659 (hereinafter "Aldis"). This rejection should be withdrawn based on the comments and remarks herein.

Independent claims 1, 15, 29 and 30 are amended herein to include the features and limitations of claims 6 and 20, independent claim 7 is amended herein to include the features and limitations of claims 1 and 8, and claim 22 is amended to be an independent claim, so that these independent claims recite allowable subject matter. Claims 2-4 and 9-14 depend from claim 1, and claims 16-18 and 23-28 depend from claim 15, each dependent claim incorporating all of the features and limitations of its base claim. Hence these dependent claims recite allowable subject matter. Claims 5, 19 and 21 are canceled, rendering their rejections moot.

Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates that claims 6, 8, 20 and 22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As discussed above, claims 6, 8 and 20 are canceled and their allowable subject matter is added to claims 1, 7 and 15, respectively. Claim 22 is rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claim 21.

New Claims

New claim 31 includes the features and limitations of claims 29, 7 and 8, and new claim 32 includes the features and limitations of claims 30, 7, and 8, so that these claims recite at least

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the allowable subject matter of claim 8. Thus these new claims are allowable.

Conclusion

For at least the reasons set forth in the foregoing discussion, Applicant believes that the Application is now allowable, and respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejection and allow the Application. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment, or regarding the Application generally, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katherine R. Vieyra", written in a cursive style.

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